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"Sacred" and "Secular" in Australian Rock Art

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Enfin, en regardant vos belles photos, j'ai l'impression qu'une assez forte proportion d'oeuvres rupestres est dans un état d'altération assez avancée. Une protection de cet art rupestre, même élémentaire, existe-t-elle en Tanzanie?

François Soleilhoupou
Département de
Géographie Physique
Univ. P. et M. CURIE,
Paris, France

Les analyses chimiques seront réalisées prochainement. La roche dominante est de caractère granitique. En ce qui concerne la protection, la création de parcs et l'engagement de gardiens sont envisagés par le Département des Antiquités.

ROCK ART INVENTORY IN ZAMBIA

Zambia has a rich rock art heritage and it needs international support to record and protect it adequately. We have recorded over a hundred rock art sites, ranging in age from 18,000 years ago to the 18th century A.D. Unfortunately, these sites are not adequately inventoried and conserved because, to date, Zambia does not have anyone specialized in rock art preservation. This year however, a chemist employed by the National Monuments Commission is to be trained as a conservator. Since rock art seems to be the most threatened among Zambia's relics, we hope the international community will help us in training this man. We think the field course your Centre organises every year will be adequate to give him the necessary knowledge and techniques to inventory Zambia's rock art. Thereafter, we wish to request that you second an expert to work with our man on rock art documentation.

N.M. Katankwa
Director
National Monuments Commission
Livingstone, Zambia

Applications for the Summer School in Rock Art Studies should be addressed to Centro Camuno di Studi Preistorici. Requests for consultants, the Cultural Heritage Division, UNESCO, Paris. Applications for scholarships may be addressed to both.

ROCK ART SALVAGE IN GRENADA

New petroglyphs have recently been discovered in Grenada. No doubt many more could be found if a survey was carried out. Several known sites are increasingly being damaged by visitors and at least one important locality is being destroyed by the construction of a road.

Unfortunately, we have no laws pertaining to the preservation of historical monuments and sites. We are in urgent need of help in recording rock art sites so that some documentation of them will remain.

Michael J.J. Jessamy
Grenada National Museum
West Indies

It is becoming ever more urgent to train rock art specialists. For this purpose, a few scholarships are available, for which potential candidates may submit applications. Under programs of international and regional cooperation, support for well conceived projects may be considered.

NO ROCK ART IN GHANA?

Rock art is one of humankind's earliest endeavours at communication, and forms a priceless evidence of World Cultural Heritage.

It is regretted that as of now, Ghana has no record of rock art, however, we wish to initiate cooperation to search for rock art in our country.

Dr. J.N. Dabrah
Ghana Museum & Monuments
Accra

Ghana is one of the few countries in the world where rock art has not yet been reported. But this does not mean that no rock art exists there. Once the first site is discovered, others will follow.

"SACRED" AND "SECULAR" IN AUSTRALIAN ROCK ART

Recently I have been questioned by several scholars about the terms "sacred" and "secular" in my research on Aboriginal rock art in Australia. It seems clear that many people are uncomfortable with distinguishing between sacred and secular within a tribal context. I would like to

express my viewpoint briefly, and hopefully to clear up some of the misconceptions that are held about Aboriginal concepts of spirituality.

When I was conducting fieldwork concerning the nature and function of sacred places in Aboriginal culture, I came to conclude that the Aborigines do distinguish between the two very important and real realms of sacred and secular. The distinction is subtle, and the philosophy is complex. However, the understanding of these concepts will add depth to our appreciation of Aboriginal art and culture.

Anthropologists who have worked among the Aborigines have long noted the chain which links the realms of sacred and temporal. In some of the more insightful works, these realms are shown to be in an integrated harmony, rather than in conflict. Together they make up a single rainbow of blending colors. These colors are interconnected, yet they are individual elements with distinguishable characteristics of their own. As A.P. Elkin has noted, Aboriginal art consists of various elements which may be distinguished, but which are so fluidly integrated that they cannot be separated. Robert Berndt has written of what he calls the "mundane-sacred continuum". The point is that the two realms do exist in Aboriginal cosmology, although perhaps not independently.

For the purposes of examining relationships in rock art, it is essential to categorize the design elements. Through fieldwork among various tribal groups in Australia, I have come to realize that in Aboriginal art there are degrees of sacredness. If we approach our research cautiously and with an open mind, we might find that this distinction provides an important and culturally recognized category through we can further our understanding of the role of rock art in Aboriginal culture.

In Aboriginal Australia, spirituality does enter into most all aspects of daily living. This is not to say, however, that the Aborigines are incapable of taking their philosophy one more step and incorporating secular concepts into their very rich metaphysics. Meanwhile, our own quest for truth continues. In this search we must learn to be inquisitive, open-minded and willing to abandon. In these and other ways, the Aborigines have succeeded.

Paul Faulstich
Alhambra, California

NEW ROCK ENGRAVINGS AT JUMILLA, (MURCIA), SPAIN

I wish to communicate the recent discovery of new schematic engravings, including cup and ring marks, cup marks, footprints, and 340 meter so-called 'topographical patterns' over of rock surface in the vicinity of Jumilla (Murcia).

J. Molina
Museo Municipal
Jumilla, Spain

Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Figs. 1-2
Recently discovered engravings from Jumilla, Spain.